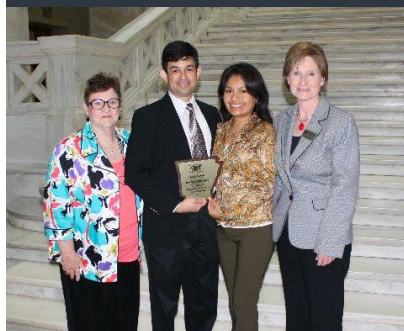


STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



In photo, from left: Ann Henry, GED Examiner; Hector Fernandez; Hector's wife, Jacqueline Valenzuela; and Linda Kindy, Adult Education Coordinator.

Hector Fernandez, a Little Rock Adult Education Center student, tied as the highest scorer of the 7,539 who were awarded the *Arkansas High School Diploma* in 2010.

Hector scored 768 out of a possible 800 on the GED. His future goals include furthering his education in the field of computer science and owning a company that provides information technology to other companies and local government entities.

"We are very honored to have the top scorer in the state as a student at the Adult Education Center," said Linda Kindy, Little Rock Adult Education Coordinator. "Hopefully, [Hector's achievement] will motivate others in the state who do not have a high school diploma to earn their GED credential."

Top 25 GED Scorers
Honored

The 25 highest scorers on Arkansas's General Educational Development (GED®) Tests were honored during a ceremony in the rotunda on the second floor of the state Capitol in Little Rock on April 21, 2011.

"The awards ceremony was a very special event for Adult Education in Arkansas because the top 25 GED scorers in Arkansas for 2010 were recognized for their outstanding accomplishments," said Department of Career Education GED Program Manager Janice Hanlon. "In 2010, 8,783 individuals took the test and 7,539 passed which reflects an 86 percent pass rate in Arkansas. The national rate stands at about 70 percent. Our adult education centers throughout the state do an excellent job preparing students for the tests."

"People of all ages take the GED tests," said Hanlon. "Last year, we had 43 Arkansans 60 years old or older to take the GED. Anyone who passes the test is awarded an Arkansas High School Diploma. We are very proud of the individuals we are honoring."

The Top 10 accepting and qualifying GED scorers will be awarded Second Effort scholarships from the Department of Higher Education in the amount of \$1,000 each year for four years. The scholarships will be awarded contingent upon legislative approval.

In his remarks to the students, William "Bill" Walker, Jr., Director of the Arkansas Department of Career Education congratulated them for taking the important step of attaining their diploma. "It doesn't matter where you started; it's where you end up. This is just one step toward your future – don't stop."

There was a tie for the top score in 2010. Both Celeste Thornton of Pine Bluff and Hector Fernandez of Little Rock scored 768 out of a possible 800 on the GED tests.

CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS

HECTOR FERNANDEZ
Little Rock Adult Education Center
CELESTE THORNTON
Jefferson County Adult Education Center
LACEY WOOLERY
National Park Community College
STEVEN GLOVER
Arkansas Correctional School
JOSEPH SIEBENMORGEN
Conway Adult Education Center
CALEB MILLER
UA Community College-Batesville
JESSIE MILLER
Shorter College
SAMANTHA STADTER
Little Rock Adult Education Center
DANIEL WESTERBERG
Arkansas Correctional School
APRIL CHANNEL
Lonoke-Prairie Counties Adult Education
MARTINA JORDAN
Russellville Adult Education Center
SARAH JENKINS
Rich Mountain Community College
NATHAN ARNOLD
Arkansas Correctional School
THOMAS WELLS
Ouachita Technical College
JOSEPH HANSEN
Fort Smith Adult Education Center
SHANE ROBERTS
ASU-Searcy



The Arkansas Department of Career Education funds the Adult Education Division. The Adult Education Division provides programs and services statewide.

National COABE Conference

The Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) held its 2011 conference April 17-21 in San Francisco, California. The national conference was a professional development opportunity with a wide variety of sessions offered at varying lengths and formats.

This year's theme —Literacy to Work—highlights the national efforts to build closer connections between education and labor. The development of best practices that combine basic skills education and job preparation hold great promise to move our nation's potential and incumbent workers ahead. A "job" is often regarded as one of the best social services.

A number of state staff members, adult education program instructors and administrators, as well as representatives from the Arkansas Association for Continuing and Adult Education attended the conference.

WAGE™ Program Collaboration



Pictured at the WAGE Exhibit at the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Conference in Hot Springs is Allison Ramsey of StaffMark and Sidney Moncrief.

You might have heard of Sidney Moncrief, a former Razorback basketball player and NBA basketball star. No, Sidney was not looking to get a WAGE certificate to get a better job. He has a great job of helping others build successful business and educational teams such as the Arkansas Department of Career Education. Allison and others with StaffMark refer job seekers to local WAGE (Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy) programs. StaffMark is a placement agency that has been a WAGE partner for several years across the state.

A special thanks to Allison and Sidney for their dedication to helping others.

JOHNSON COUNTY ADULT EDUCATION CENTER: Shaping Lives

Assisting individuals in Johnson County to meet their educational needs is the general philosophy of the Johnson County Adult Education Center. The center does this by offering programs in GED, ABE, and ESL in a central downtown location in Clarksville convenient to a variety of clients. "Adult education is very unique," states Shirley Freeman, director of the center. "We shape our program to fit individual needs. In other educational programs, the student has to fit the shape of program."

With a small staff consisting of an administrator, one full-time teacher, two part-time teachers and a paraprofessional, the center assists individuals to see themselves in a better situation. "Many times our students are caught up in a generational issue", says Freeman. "Their parents and grandparents didn't graduate from high school, and they can't see their lives being any different. Our purpose is to help them see their lives improve by earning their GED credential, going to college, or getting a job or a better job."

Not only does Freeman encourage her students but she serves as a role model for them. She was the first in her family to graduate from college and was a high school dropout who later earned her GED diploma. After marrying, having three children and working at a factory, Freeman's husband convinced her to go back to school. Her strong score on the GED tests along with her family support gave her the confidence she needed to finish college at the University of the Ozarks, summa cum laude.

Freeman isn't the only staff member that is a role model for prospective GED test-takers. Carla Murphy, paraprofessional, also earned her GED credential. She has worked at the center for sixteen years as secretary, AERIS manager, and GED examiner. In meeting with potential students, Murphy can truly say "Do as I do, not as I say."

Jessica Pipkins (GED, ABE, and ESL instructor) loves working at the center. "We meet people that have overcome unbelievable barriers to be here."



*Pictured above :
Jessica Pipkins
instructs Ina Ross.*

*Right: Shirley
Freeman, Center
Director*

Below: Carla Murphy



Ina Ross had been out of school 54 years when she decided to go back to school at Johnson County Adult Education Center. When she was in the ninth grade, Ms. Ross' father was injured so she had to drop out of school to milk cows and help earn a living for the family. Now as an adult education student and a nurse's aide at a local hospital, she puts in 72 hours a week. According to Ms. Ross' instructor, Jessica Pipkins, "She has made great progress toward getting prepared to take the GED tests. She is a hard worker both here at the center and at work." After earning her GED diploma, Ms. Ross wants to continue her education to become an LPN.

